

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace paragraph [0039], which begins on page 8 and ends on page 9, with the following amended paragraph:

[0039] Now that some key definitions have been set forth, an overview of the system of the present invention according to a preferred embodiment thereof is provided with reference to Figure 1. Mission Collaboration System (MCS) 100 which consists of a Mission Coordinator (MC) 105, a Mission Administrator (MA) 120, and one or more Service Nodes (SN) 110. Each SN 110 is enabled by an associated Collaboration Enabler (CE) 115. Service Nodes may comprise a Local Service Node 110, a Remote Service Node 185, or a Foreign Service Node 170. Mission Collaboration System 100 can be monitored, set up, and administrated by a Human Operator via terminal called Mission Controller 160. In the case of a Remote Service Node 185, communication with Mission Coordinator 105 is via an electronic link such as a network link which may be wire based or wireless. However, in the case of a Foreign Service Node 170, communication with Mission Coordinator 105 is via an electronic link such as a network link which may be wire based or wireless indirectly through another Collaboration System 195. A MCS 100 can work with another MCS, called Remote MCS 190, at a remote geographic location, and/or work with a MCS, called Foreign MCS 180, through different Collaboration System 195. Mission Coordinator 105, Mission Administrator 120, and all Collaboration Enablers collectively comprise the Mission Collaboration Foundation.

Please replace paragraph [0045], which begins on page 10 and ends on page 11, with the following amended paragraph:

[0045] Turning now to the flowchart of Figure 2, an overview of the mission initiation process of the present invention is provided. This process is controlled by Mission Coordinator 105 as follows. Mission Coordinator 105 defines a mission based on the requirements of the mission and the capabilities of Mission Collaboration System 100 including the resources available to Mission Collaboration System 100. Mission Initiation starts at step 210 and Mission Coordinator 105 waits for a mission to be presented by MA 140 at step steps 220 and 230. Once the mission is defined and arrives at MC 105. Mission Coordinator 105 creates a Mission Instance of the mission specific to the specific request at step 240. This MI is stored in an MI pool. At this point, the mission presented by MA 120 is recorded at step 250 and MA 120 receives an acknowledgement from MC 105 that an MI has been created (step 260). If the mission is such that the root Task Instance can be created locally and automatically without SN intervention, which is determined in steps 270 and 280, control passes to step 330. Otherwise, the process waits for a request from the applicable SN for the creation of the Root TI at step steps 290 and 310. As described below, the request received from the SN may include particular directions with respect to the Root TI. Once the Root TI is created at step 330, a clone of the Root TI is placed in the TI pool at step 340. If one or more addresses for service nodes to perform the Root TI are specified, which such condition is determined in steps 350 and 360, and then the Root TI is sent to the applicable service nodes (step 370). Otherwise, the Root TI is broadcasted to all registered service nodes (step 380) so that any such service nodes capable of handling the Root TI can do so. Processing of the Mission Instance then continues at step 390 and the mission progress steps are initiated at step 395. A mission can also be one which creates a MI every time an event triggers. Such event is called Root TI Event 320, which may be, but is not necessarily limited to, a timer.

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Please replace paragraph [0057], which begins on page 17 and ends on page 18, with the following amended paragraph:

[0057] Mission Administrator 120 and its components in a preferred embodiment of the present invention is illustrated in Figure 7. Mission Administrator 120 provides tools for Mission Controller 105 to administrate and monitor the operations of a Mission. As detailed in Figure 7, Mission Administrator 120 includes Task Instance Processor 760 and Mission Monitoring Manager 750. Also included is a component 740 for handling User Account Manager and Authentication & Authorization 730 and Resource Configuration 720. Additional components include various utility tools 710 useful in connection with Controller's administration operation. The Mission Administrator 120 also includes a Central Control Unit 770 that controls and manages each and every module, and a Transfer Agent 625 that passes messages between Mission Administrator 120 and Mission Coordinator 105.

Please replace paragraph [0067], which begins on page 21 and ends on page 22, with the following amended paragraph:

[0067] Of course, the above described steps are merely exemplary and are broadly defined. Some steps may logically be performed in parallel with other steps while other steps are dependent upon the completion of other steps before they may be initiated. Mission definitions take this requirement into account and are designed to obtain the most time efficient completion of the overall mission based upon its logical makeup. In this example, the initial task may be to obtain the user's credit report from a credit reporting company 820. This may be the initial step because it may be the case that if the user's credit score is below a certain threshold, a loan may not be possible under any conditions and no further processing would be required, other than possibly

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informing the user of such information. MCS 100 generates a task instance specific to this mission and including, for example, the user's social security number so that the appropriate credit reporting data may be obtained from credit reporting company 820. The task instance is in the form discussed above and in addition to carrying the necessary data such as social security number, the task instance may also carry, among other things, executable code designed to accomplish the task. In this case, such code may accomplish the function of querying credit reporting company's database 825 for the credit information based upon the social security number. In this way, it is not necessary for credit reporting company's server (which in this example, is a remote server) to store the computer code necessary to accomplish the task. Rather, it is transmitted along with the task instance. The interaction between Credit Reporting Company's personnel and the system will be done via terminal 815.

Please replace paragraph [0070], which begins on page 23 and ends on page 24, with the following amended paragraph:

[0070] Based upon the results received from the underwriters and the mission definition, an underwriter may be selected as well as one of their particular products based upon application of the reasoning engine in managing the results returned from the task instances previously broadcast. Continuing with the example, the appraisal request may have been sent out via a task instance in parallel with the requests to the underwriters. This case is indicative of a business rule in which the choice of appraiser would not depend upon the underwriter or the product selected. Alternatively, the mission may be defined such that the appraisal task is only initiated after the underwriter and product has been selected. In this case, the underwriter may require a particular appraiser 830 or appraisal methodology as specified via the results container returned with the task instance to MCS 100 after task completion. Appraisal 830 will do its

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corresponding work through its database 835 and terminal 840 if Human interaction is required.

Please replace paragraph [0071], which appears on page 21, with the following amended paragraph:

[0071] Once the appraisal task has been initiated, for example, a task instance may be generated for transmission to the user's employer's remote server 875. Again, employer personnel may interact with the task operation via terminal 885. In this case, for example, employment and salary information for the user, which may be stored in Employer's database 880, may be requested by the task and returned to MCS 100 in the results container of the applicable task instance.

Attachments:

Replacement Sheets (4).